**DRAFT**

**Civil Society Open Government Partnership Interest Group**

**Statement of Principle about Ireland’s OGP Action Plan**

Proposals for inclusion in Ireland’s Open Government Action Plan should be about creating more open and transparent government (i.e. changing ‘how’ government works) rather than potentially partisan suggestions about the content of public policy (i.e. ‘what’ government should do).

Noting the international guidelines for participation in OGP, Ireland’s Action Plan should indicate how actions will address the four Concrete Commitments of OGP: Transparency; Citizen Participation; Accountability; and Technology and Innovation.

In each case, Ireland’s Action Plan should indicate how actions under the above four Commitments will also address OGP’s five Grand Challenges: Improving Public Services; Increasing Public Integrity; More Effectively Managing Public Resources; Creating Safer Communities; and Increasing Corporate Accountability.

While irrelevant, vexatious or narrowly politically motivated actions should be filtered out of Ireland’s OGP Action Plan, care should be taken not to exclude anyone from the process. All contributions, regardless of their content, should be acknowledged in the ‘long list’ or ‘wish list’ of actions generated by civil society and the general public, while at the same time acknowledging that there is not necessarily consensus about every proposal and that, in some cases, proposals may represent minority or individual opinions.

**ENDS**

**NOTES**

The following guidelines are taken from<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/ogp-participation>:

**Concrete Commitments**

While the nature of concrete commitments under any grand challenge area should be flexible and allow for each country’s unique circumstances, all OGP commitments should reflect four core open government principles.

**Transparency**: information on government activities and decisions is open, comprehensive, timely, freely available to the public and meets basic open data standards (e.g. raw data, machine readability)

**Citizen Participation**: governments seek to mobilize citizens to engage in public debate, provide input, and make contributions that lead to more responsive, innovative and effective governance.

**Accountability**: there are rules, regulations and mechanisms in place that call upon government actors to justify their actions, act upon criticisms or requirements made of them, and accept responsibility for failure to perform with respect to laws or commitments.

**Technology and Innovation**: governments embrace the importance of providing citizens with open access to technology, the role of new technologies in driving innovation, and the importance of increasing the capacity of citizens to use technology.

Countries may focus their commitments at the national, local and/or sub-national level—wherever they believe their open government efforts will have the greatest impact.

Recognizing that achieving open government commitments often involves a multi-year process, governments should attach timeframes and benchmarks to their commitments that indicate what will be accomplished in year one and beyond, wherever possible.

**Grand Challenges**

OGP commitments will be structured around a set of five “grand challenges” that governments face. In year one, countries will choose at least one of these grand challenges and develop concrete commitments around open government to address it. Countries are welcome and encouraged to tackle more than one challenge in year one.

The five OGP grand challenges are:

**Improving Public Services**—measures that address the full spectrum of citizen services including health, education, criminal justice, water, electricity, telecommunications and any other relevant service areas, by fostering public service improvement or private sector innovation

**Increasing Public Integrity**—measures that address corruption and public ethics, access to information, campaign finance reform, and media and civil society freedom

**More Effectively Managing Public Resources**—measures that address budgets, procurement, natural resources and foreign assistance

**Creating Safer Communities**—measures that address public safety, the security sector, disaster and crisis response, and environmental threats

**Increasing Corporate Accountability**—measures that address corporate responsibility on issues such as the environment, anti-corruption, consumer protection, and community engagement